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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2061  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0658  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1307  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0664  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1165  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0224  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0503  
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 4897  
RUCPDC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 0227  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS PRETORIA 003447

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DEPT FOR AF/S, EEB/ESC, ISN  
DOE FOR SPERL, PERSON, BIENAWSKI, PARKER, SCOTT, AND CLAPPER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ENRG](#) [TRGY](#) [ETRD](#) [BEXP](#) [KTIA](#) [KNNP](#) [IAEA](#) [SF](#)  
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA REAFFIRMS ITS INTEREST IN SIGNING THE  
U.S.-SA NUCLEAR R&D AGREEMENT

REF: A. PRETORIA 3078

- [1](#)B. PRETORIA 3077
- [1](#)C. PRETORIA 3076
- [1](#)D. PRETORIA 3061
- [1](#)E. PRETORIA 3012

[1](#)1. (SBU) Nuclear R&D Agreement: SAG Department of Mines and Energy (DME) Chief Director: Nuclear Tseliso Maqubela reaffirmed South Africa's intent to sign the proposed bilateral Agreement for Cooperation in Research and Development in Nuclear Technology, speaking to Resource/Energy Officer on the margins of the September 25-26 Energy Summit (Septel). Maqubela regretted that the SAG was unable to obtain signing authority from the cabinet in advance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) September meeting in Vienna, but he stressed that the SAG wanted to pursue bringing the proposed agreement to fruition (Ref C). He noted that the SAG may want to eventually sign the agreement in Washington D.C. in order to maintain a lower profile in the run up to Eskom's award of a supplier for new nuclear power plants, for which Westinghouse and French Areva are in contention (Ref A). Maqubela also said that the SAG was interested in pursuing the separate proposal for creating a Joint Standing Committee on Nuclear Cooperation, but he was unable to give a more detailed response. (NOTE: Post aims to meet soon with Depty Director General Neliswe Magubane, who led the April delegation to Washington, where there was positive movement on this initiative. End Note.)

[1](#)2. (SBU) GNEP: Maqubela said Minister of Energy Buyelwa Sonjica did not attend the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) Ministerial on September 16 in Vienna, because the SAG is not prepared to sign the GNEP Principles given South Africa's intent to maintain the option of enriching uranium and reprocessing spent fuel as part of its recent draft nuclear energy policy (Refs D and E). He noted that this intent also remained an obstacle to accepting the DOE return of spent fuel program, for which U.S. law requires commitment to forever forego enrichment (Ref B). Both Maqubela and the Minister in her speech at the Summit reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to non-proliferation and intent to consider enrichment only to low-grade uranium (LEU) as part of its policy of pursuing uranium beneficiation and security

of supply.  
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